

St Paul's in the Park Newsletter November 2024

Prayer

He was a very simple old sailor, the skipper of the small boat that was taking them to the Shetlands, and they were a young, lively party from London on tour, going to do a night or two on the island. They were not above 'taking the mickey' a bit and thought his way of saying grace before meals quite quaint and old-fashioned. However, before long a storm blew up and as the little ship began to pitch more and more violently, morale amongst the visitors wavered.

A small deputation went up to ask the captain's opinion. 'Well,' he said, 'maybe we'll get through, and maybe we won't. I can't remember such a storm.' The news was greeted with dismay down below and finally another deputation went up to the bridge to ask the captain if he would be so good as to come down and say a prayer with his frightened passengers. His reply was simple. 'I say my prayers when it's calm, and when it's rough, I tend to my ship.'

It is important that we remember to pray, not just when we are in trouble and need God's help but all the time. It's very easy when things are going well to forget God, but that is quite selfish, for two reasons. Firstly, because God is there all the time and he wants to hear from us, to have a relationship with us based on constant communication.

Secondly, when things are going well, let's not forget to thank God and to also pray for those for whom things are not going well. I do believe there is a link between gratitude and feeling concern for those who might be less fortunate, for whatever reason.

'Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.' Colossians 4:2

Morning Tea Roster

There is no doubt that one of the things we do very well at St Paul's in the Park is provide wonderful morning teas after our Sunday service, and I am most grateful to those who are responsible for this. If you would like to be added to the morning tea roster, please let me know.

Christmas Services

In our last newsletter I did indicate that we would be holding a 'Carols in the Park' service on the afternoon of Sunday 22 December. It has been decided, for several reasons, that we will not be holding that service.

The schedule for Christmas services is:

Christmas Eve: 6.00pm Carol service 11.00pm Holy Communion

Christmas Day: 9.00am Holy Communion

Giving

I do appreciate the financial support we receive from our church community. There are naturally costs involved in the running of a church and we are just holding our head above the water. So thank you! The most effective way of donating is via internet banking (bank a/c 06 0991 0056055 00). However, if you would like to be a regular giver, whether you choose internet banking or the envelope system, you do need a donor number. That way, we can ensure you receive your receipt at the end of the financial year. You can contact Angela Rowson and she will provide one for you – angelatheguide@gmail.com 021 393 538

Time for a Smile

Two men were arrested for being drunk and disorderly. The policeman asks the first of them, 'Where do you live?' 'No fixed abode,' says the man. 'Ok,' says the policeman and turns to the second, 'So where do you live?' 'I live in the flat above him,' replies the second.

Food Bank

As you might well imagine, there is high demand for charitable groceries in this period leading up to Christmas. Please be mindful of this, and perhaps you might include goods suited to this festive season.

To Ponder

'To know what is right and not do it is almost as bad as doing wrong.' Anon.



Christmas Trees

I am sure many of you will be contemplating putting up your Christmas trees in the very near future, if you haven't already done so. Our tree has actually been up since the end of last month (October!). Now, you might think this is a tad early but it certainly brings a festive air to our home and a few smiles to the younger brigade.

I do have some scientific study to back this up. A psychoanalyst wrote that putting up Christmas decorations early 'acts as an anchor or pathway to those childhood magical emotions' and so ultimately makes you happier.

I am uncertain whether or not he had October in mind when he wrote that!

Advent

This Sunday is Advent Sunday. Advent is the season of preparation – preparing ourselves for the great festival of Christmas. In a non-spiritual sense, it is a time for shopping, end of year celebrations, meeting deadlines, putting up Christmas trees! In a spiritual sense, we prepare for Christmas by focusing for four weeks on the essence and significance of this Christian festival – the celebration of God coming into our midst in human form.

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